

Interviewer Finds Herschman and Leo Low Cultured to a Degree.

By LASSELO SCHWARTZ.

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It is not often that one has an opportunity to interview two eminent artists at the same time. That's the good fortune that fell to my lot when I visited the two great champions of Jewish musical art-Cantor Mordecai Herschman, of Vilna, Russia, and Leo Loy, music director of the largest Synagogue in the world, Warsaw, Poland.

It takes but a few minutes in the company of these two artists to realize that they are cultured musicians in more than one sense. While it is evident that Jewish music lies closest to their hearts, nevertheless, both of them realize that with all its beauty with all its quaint rhythmic and melodic characteristic traits, Jewish music, like the music of any other race, while complete within itself, forms but one pillar in the Walhalla of musical art.

SINGER OF THE PEOPLE

Cantor Herschman's programs consists of famous songs from the synagogue services, and of Jewish folk songs. Like most cantors, he sang

in the Temple choir for many years. Then, taking up his musical studies at the Conservatory of Music, in Kiev, Russia, he finally became the cantor of Vilna.

Cantor Henschman is a singer of the people; and after many years of struggle, he now enjoys the fame of being one of the greatest cantors and singers of Jewish folk-songs. To put it in his own humorous manner: "I Bids Jewish folk songs like McCormack sings his Irish tunes."

JEWISH McCORAMCK.

Unlike, most comparisons, this one is not odious, for the , cantor from Russia is bloused with one of the most wonderful tenor voices in this wide world. And to continue the simile, much like McCormack, he also wins his audience through the simplicity and sincerity of his art. Only a man who had suffered as the Jews have under the tyrannical government of old Russia, only such a Jewish singer could surcharge his songs with the great dramatic powers that Cantor Henschman infuses into his rendition of these plaintive melodies.

In listening to these quaint songs, one does not have to understand the lyrics in order to grasp the message of the song for the melody in itself

is so expressive of sorrows, or bubbling over with humor or sounding the hopes of the hunted Jewish race, that it is bound to awaken the finest sentiment within the soul of any music lover of whatever faith he may be.

DIRTH OF JEWISH FOLK-SONGS.

Leo Low, who conducts the choral accompaniment at Cantor Herschman's concerts is one of the greatest authorities on Jewish music. He was just penning an essay on the subject for the Jewish Press of America, when I came to interview him , and it was from this thorough scholar that I received information on the cardinal points of the Jewish musical cult.

"You see, the Jewish folk-song differs in many respects from the folk-songs of other races. First of all, unlike other folk songs, the Jewish folk tunes did not thrive in the beginning in the home, but in the synagogue. For the Orthodox Jew his temple became not only a house of worship, but also a sort of a community house where he expressed all munity house, where he expressed all his sorrows and joys in song, literature or other forms of art.

FOSTERED AT FIRESIDE.

"They had no concert halls, no theater, and since the Jews' emotion finds the most natural expression in song, it was inevitable that their new musical creations should eventually be heard at the synagogues.

"In the beginning these songs were, of course, primitive, in melodic vein and in structure. Later, when professional singers made little work of cultivating these songs, the melodies developed to a higher artistic degree. From then on, the Jewish folk songs were gradually introduced into the homes, and dating from that period, a greater variety of lyric subjects were set to music by these popular composers.

"The cradle songs, the humorous songs, the love songs, multiplied a hundred fold, thanks to the influence of the Jewish fireside."

NOTED COLLECTOR.

Low has spent many years in collecting ancient Jewish folk-songs, and his works have been published abroad where they are considered indispensable by students of Jewish folk lore.

on being asked what future he prophesied for Jewish music in

Palestine, Low replied with great enthusiasm:

"Oh, I believe that when the Jew will have come into possession of Palestine, he will create music which will differ greatly from the master pieces of our living and dead composers of Jewish blood'

"You see, the Jew is quickly influenced by his surroundings, he lives in France, his works are composed in a French way, in Hungary, his music becomes imbued with the true Hungarian spirit, etc. Now then, when the Jew will have land all his own, his racial characteristic traits will have a freer play in influencing his musical creations.

MELODIES OF DREAMS

"Add to this the fact that he will be strongly influenced by climatic conditions of the Orient, which of course, are bound to be reflected in his music, literature and all arts, and you can picture to yourself what new works the musical world can look to once the Jewish composer shall weave his dreams into melodies and harmonies all his own."

And with that he bid me good-by.

I left these two musical missionaries, musing on my way home about the time when every race in this world will send forth its musical missionaries, much as they send forth their consuls and ambassadors.

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